

Dunkeld & Birnam Sports and Leisure Hub

Proposed MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) : Project Overview

June 2020

1. Introduction

Dunkeld & Birnam Sports and Leisure Hub is a registered Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) which presently owns and operates a number of sports facilities including a clubhouse, tennis courts and a bowling green. The organisation's defined purposes are:

- the provision of recreational facilities including the development of new facilities and spaces and improving existing facilities in Dunkeld and Birnam
- the organisation of recreational activities in Dunkeld and Birnam with the object of improving health and wellbeing of the persons participating in these activities: and
- the advancement of public participation in sport in Dunkeld and Birnam

2. Background

In recent years the Hub has been progressively upgrading and expanding parts of its facilities, including upgraded tennis courts, mini-tennis facilities, installation of LED floodlights and a free-to-all basketball hoop, which has proven a huge success with local kids. The local football team has also become more involved with the Hub, with more shared use of facilities and the success in securing portable floodlights. Whilst progressing the tennis floodlighting project SportScotland, who were part funder and advisor, visited the Hub and took an interest in our facilities and future plans. During these discussions we explored ideas on how to develop the Hub sporting facilities. SportScotland suggested that we might want to consider a MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) as it was a cost effective and low maintenance project type that has been extensively rolled out across Scotland over recent years.

A MUGA is simply an external, multi-use games area approximately the size of one of our existing tennis courts which is surrounded by rigid sports fencing. It can accommodate a wide range of sports such as 5-a-side football, netball, basketball, hockey, tennis and also sports related activities such as fitness training. The majority of MUGA's are external courts however there are examples of MUGA's with roof canopies to provide protection from the weather.



Typical MUGA



Football – basketball – hockey MUGA option

From this initial idea preliminary master-plan sketches were prepared to evaluate how a MUGA could work on our site, whilst also considering other long term uses of our facilities and land. In parallel a series of discussions and consultations were initiated across the community that culminated in an internal presentation of ideas to Hub members on 16 November 2019.

The initial feedback has been positive from various community groups and to build on the initial enthusiasm a temporary netball court has been marked out on the existing car park to allow the Hub to facilitate netball in the community. School and club usage is planned for later this year (however this planned start looks like being impacted by Covid 19 measures). A similar basketball court is planned.

3. The Proposed MUGA



A set of conceptual design drawings and images are appended to this paper, which describe the proposed MUGA. The views include a site plan, aerial views plus views at ground level and internally.

3.1 MUGA

There are 3 principle elements to the MUGA to be considered by the Hub.

- a. The range of sports and activities to be catered for will influence the MUGA playing surface specification. The challenge will be finding the right surface, which will suit the majority of sports. Community consensus on the range of sports and activities will be required.
- b. Floodlighting of the MUGA would be an essential part of the project to ensure full year usage capability. Recent experience with the tennis lighting has confirmed how cost effective and inexpensive the latest LED sports lighting is. The type of lighting will depend on whether the MUGA is to be open to air or ultimately covered.
- c. Whilst the MUGA is an outdoor sports facility it is possible to construct a lightweight cover structure over the facility to effectively provide an “indoor” type environment for sports and activities. Examples of this being done locally include Tomatin and Rothiemurchus projects.



Tomatin MUGA



Rothiemurchus

The major benefit of covering the MUGA is that all activities on the court would be protected from the weather with improved year round usage of the facilities. The roof fabric for a covered MUGA would be twin skinned, as per Rothiemurchus project, to ensure no light spill through the fabric in the evenings.

3.2 Car Parking

The land owned by the Hub has sufficient space available for a MUGA to be located to the east of the tennis courts, partly on the grass and partly on the existing car park area. To enable this, alternative car parking would be required to compensate for the loss of parking spaces. The solution proposed is to develop a new car park on the land between the medical centre and the drainage burn (the area presently used for caravans and parking during Birnam Games). Discussions on long-term usage of this area by the Hub have been progressed favourably with the Church (the owners of the land). In moving the car park to the east of the drainage burn it effectively creates a predominantly vehicular free zone around our sports and leisure facilities, with considerable safety benefits. A footbridge would link the 2 areas. In addition it is possible to retain some of the existing car park area for a number of special needs car bays and bike racks. Our existing car park can accommodate approximately 26 cars (32 if double parking is considered). The proposed new car park can accommodate up to 35 cars.

4. Programme Scenarios

The MUGA project can be delivered either in phases or as a larger single project. Decisions on any phasing approach would be largely dependent on the timing and availability of funding. Any development would require the alternative car parking to be in place prior to main works commencing.

The 2 most likely scenarios being considered are:

a multiple phases project – Phase 1 being an open to air MUGA Court followed at a later date by Phase 2, the roof canopy and integrated floodlighting, or:

a single phase project – comprising the MUGA court, roof canopy and floodlighting.

The initial MUGA court construction would have a similar construction period to the recent tennis court upgrade works of approximately 3-4 months. The follow-on canopy and lighting works would require in the region of 4-6 months. The time between phases 1 and 2 would be the duration required to raise the relevant follow-on funding.

The main programme influence will most likely be the time it takes the Hub to raise the necessary funds.

5. Costs

To assist our planning budgetary costs have been obtained from various sources including SportScotland project database and from specific budgetary quotations provided from specialist contractors. The budgetary figures that we are considering for the MUGA are as follows:

Multiple Phase project

- MUGA court and enclosure – £65,000.
Additional standalone LED floodlighting would add £15,000
- MUGA roof canopy and integrated LED floodlighting £160,000

Single Phase Project

- **Complete project – MUGA, roof canopy and integrated LED floodlighting £225,000**

Note – these costs exclude VAT. The SCIO will be investigating VAT liabilities and options as we progress in more detail.

In addition there will be a number of associated costs for issues such as upgrading of the Hub electrical infrastructure, authority approvals, professional fees etc. which could be circa £15-20,000.

6. Authority Approvals

No formal approach has been made to date to the planning authorities. Our site is designated for sports and leisure purposes and we believe that a MUGA would align with this categorisation.

7. What Next?

The Hub trustees and committee believes that a MUGA would enable the hub to grow sports and leisure activities in the Dunkeld & Birnam area and help broaden community involvement with the Hub. We believe there is a need for a facility such as this in our community to cater for local people of all ages. This could be:

- Local school use – netball, football and games generally
- Untapped local basketball players – building on the success of the existing hoop
- Footballers training on a 5-a-side court all year round
- Walking football for older players
- Local netballers, who presently need to travel elsewhere to find a game and court
- A potential 3rd tennis court (covered) for the club
- Fitness classes, presently struggling to find suitable year round space
- Touch rugby
- Local kids and adults wanting to hang out and generally play sports with their friends
- Other ideas – there may be other potential user groups out there – please contact us..

To take this idea forward will require support from across the community and therefore at this stage the Hub committee is looking for further feedback from the membership and the wider community on these plans.

We will also require a mandate from the membership on progressing these plans. Details of how this will be progressed will be set out separately.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Dunkeld and Birnam Sports and Leisure Hub

Attachments:

1. Concept Design Visuals